



Office of Public Instruction  
**Linda McCulloch, Superintendent**  
PO Box 202501  
Helena, MT 59620-2501

**Montana Pupil Transportation**  
**News and Updates**  
**August/September 2003**



**Maxine Mougeot, Director of Pupil Transportation**  
Phone 406-444-3096  
Fax 406-444-0509  
[mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us)

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### **Since You Asked**

#### ***Is the school district required to do school bus evacuations and what are the guidelines?***

According to law, school bus evacuations must be conducted twice per school year and must include all students whether they ride to and from school or not. The first evacuation must be held within the first five days of school. The second evacuation must be at the beginning of the second semester.

All students must practice the evacuation drills since they will probably ride an activity bus sometime during the school year. All evacuation drills should be conducted in the same way each time so the students will know exactly what to expect. Kids need to know what it looks like, what it sounds like and what it feels like so there are no surprises during a real emergency. The driver should always be prepared and help the students to be prepared also.

For more information on student evacuation, call Maxine at (406) 444-3096 or email at [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

#### ***Who won the Bus Road-E-O in Butte this year?***

I am pleased to announce the following overall winners of the Butte Road-E-O.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Jim Pearson	Lewistown
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Tom Daughenbaugh	Box Elder
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Monte Stump	Rocky Boy
4 <sup>th</sup>	Walt Richards	Shepherd
5 <sup>th</sup> Tie	Tony Rand	Fort Benton
5 <sup>th</sup> Tie	Kenny Watson	Rocky Boy

Winners of the *Stop on \$5.00* are:

Kim Kulbeck	Harlem
Don Ruybal	Helena
Dave Majerus	Saco
Ed Shindoll	Townsend
Larry Walsh	Huntley
Steve Llewellyn	Missoula
Patty Saylor	Alberton
Kenny Watson	Rocky Boy
Mike Mull	Dillon
Steve Don	Fort Benton

Congratulations to each of you. Thanks also to Marilyn Leazenby and her well organized panel of judges for a great Road-E-O.

#### ***How does my district provide a driver training class like those that are happening around the state?***

The first thing to think about is where to hold the training and how many drivers can be accommodated. Visit with the local drivers and find out what kinds of training they would like to have. Decide on the content and contact potential speakers. Obtain your board's approval to sponsor the training.

How will the training be financed? Check with the district clerk about how fees and payments should be handled. A reasonable fee can be charged to pay for lunch, copying fees, mailing fees, speakers, breaks or whatever is required. Be sure to contact the school district clerk for information about receiving funds and accounting for them. If the fee includes lunch, find someone to cater. Community groups are great at helping out with cooking, serving and making cookies for breaks. Enlist community members.

Usually the school district has an assembly room or gym that can house the training. Request the use of the district's electronic equipment. Presenters will need equipment such as overhead projectors, VCR/TV combo, Proxima/computer combo for PowerPoint presentations and screens to project the presentations on. In a gym, it is necessary to have a public address system of some kind.

Once the arrangements have been made for the trainers/speakers (get confirmations), facility and equipment, begin to put together the agenda. Enlist two people to take care of the registration and to collect whatever fees are required.

Find someone to facilitate the meeting. This person manages the agenda, introduces speakers and provides technical assistance to the speakers. The facilitator would also help out with equipment problems, monitor the PA system to make sure that everyone can hear and would have a positive influence on the outcome of the training.

Please contact Maxine at (406) 444-3096 for further information or email at [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

***My district purchased a new school bus. It came equipped with lap/shoulder belts. What is the district's responsibility?***

MCA 61-13-103 Seatbelt use required - exceptions.

(1) No driver may operate a motor vehicle upon a highway of the state of Montana unless each occupant of a designated seating position is wearing a properly adjusted and fastened seatbelt.

(2) The provisions of this section do not apply to:

- (a) an occupant of a motor vehicle who possesses a written statement from a licensed physician that he is unable to wear a seatbelt for medical reasons;
- (b) an occupant of a motor vehicle in which all seatbelts are being used by other occupants;
- (c) an operator of a motorcycle as defined in MCA 61-1-105 or a motor-driven cycle as defined in MCA 61-1-106;
- (d) an occupant of a vehicle licensed as special mobile equipment as defined in MCA 61-1-104;
- (e) children subject to the provisions of MCA 61-9-420; or
- (f) an occupant who makes frequent stops with a motor vehicle in his official job duties and who may be exempted by the department.

MCA 61-9-420 Child safety restraint systems - standards - exemptions (in part).

(1) If a child under 2 years of age is a passenger in a motor vehicle, that motor vehicle must be equipped with one child safety restraint for each child in the vehicle and each child must be properly restrained.

(2) A child between 2 and 4 years of age or weighing less than 40 pounds who is a passenger in a motor vehicle must be properly restrained or restrained in a safety belt that meets applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.

There is no exemption for school bus occupants, so if belts are present, all riders must use them. Manufacturers are required in some states to provide belts and from a liability perspective those same manufacturers would probably prefer to put the belt systems in all buses. If the school administration or driver does not enforce the usage then a crash certainly could bring liability to the district. We do not recommend removing the belts.

***Has anything changed for the transportation community that related to transportation and Homeland Security?***

I received a message from the National Association of State Directors for Pupil Transportation today asking that the phone number for the Transportation Security Coordination Center (TSCC) be distributed as widely as possible. The number is 703-563-3237. TSCC handles all transportation security incident reporting. Please use it as one of your first points of contact when reporting a transportation security incident.

Additionally, you should report any transportation security incident to:

Jim Greene, Administrator, Disaster and Emergency Services  
Department of Military Affairs – HAFRC  
Montana Disaster and Emergency Services  
1900 Williams Street  
PO Box 4789  
Helena, MT 59604-4789  
(406) 841-3911

[www.discoveringmontana.com/css/default.asp](http://www.discoveringmontana.com/css/default.asp)

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
Office of the Press Secretary  
For Immediate Release  
March 6, 2003

***“Paige, Ridge, Unveil New Web Resource to Help Schools Plan for Emergencies”***

In an effort to provide school leaders with more information about emergency preparedness, U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige and U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge today unveiled a new section on the U.S. Department of Education's Web site - [www.ed.gov/emergencyplan](http://www.ed.gov/emergencyplan) - designed to be a one-stop-shop to help school officials plan for any emergency, including natural disasters, violent incidents and terrorist acts.

Secretaries Paige and Ridge unveiled the tools at Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Md.

"As a former superintendent of the nation's seventh largest school district, I know the importance of emergency planning," Secretary Paige said. "The midst of a crisis is not the time to start figuring out who ought to do what. At that moment, everyone involved - from top to bottom - should know the drill and know each other."

The tide of events since September 11, 2001, demands that schools be better prepared. We're here to help - to provide more information and resources and to highlight programs we know work. This new Web resource will help our schools strengthen and improve their emergency plans..."

Paige unveiled the new resource on the heels of Homeland Security Secretary Ridge's introduction of the multi-year, multi-media Ready Campaign, which includes a new Web site, [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), to "build a more prepared nation, one individual, one family, one neighborhood, one community at a time."

"Recently the Department launched a readiness campaign where I asked Americans to do a few simple things to help protect their families in the event of a terrorist attack against their community. These steps are critically important whether at home, work or school," said Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge. "I commend Secretary Paige and the Department Education for taking the initiative to prepare our schools for any emergency, from natural disasters to terrorism. Through initiatives like this, we are achieving our goal of building a more prepared nation, one individual, one family, one neighborhood, one community at a time."

The U.S. Department of Education has been working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and other federal agencies on school preparedness. In addition, the Department has been working with experts from around the country to develop a model emergency response and crisis management plan. That plan will be released later this month.

Proposed plan content is excerpted below.

## **Emergency Plans**

If you don't have a school crisis plan in partnership with public safety agencies, including law enforcement and fire, health, mental health and local emergency preparedness agencies, develop one. Ensure that it addresses traditional crises and emergencies such as fires, school shootings and accidents, as well as biological, radiological, chemical and other terrorist activities.

If you do have a crisis plan, review it. Ensure that it addresses issues related to terrorism, such as biological, radiological and chemical attacks. Train, practice and drill. Documents on a shelf don't work in a crisis.

Ensure that your school district crisis plan addresses the unique circumstances and needs of individual schools. Districts are encouraged to develop a separate plan for each school building. Each school crisis plan should address four major areas - prevention/mitigation; preparedness; response and recovery.

Actions that schools should take under each of these areas include:

### **Prevention/Mitigation:**

Conduct an assessment of each school building. Identify those factors that put the building, students and staff at greater risk, such as proximity to rail tracks that regularly transport hazardous materials or facilities that produce highly toxic material or propane gas tanks, and develop a plan for reducing the risk. This can include plans to evacuate students away from these areas in times of crisis and to reposition propane tanks or other hazardous materials away from school buildings.

Work with businesses and factories in close proximity to the school to ensure that the school's crisis plan is coordinated with their crisis plans.

Ensure a process is in place for controlling access and egress to the school. Require all persons who do not have authority to be in the school to sign in.

Review traffic patterns, and where possible, keep cars, buses, and trucks away from school buildings.

Review landscaping, and ensure buildings are not obscured by overgrowth of bushes or shrubs where contraband can be placed or persons can hide.

### **Preparedness:**

Have site plans for each school facility readily available and ensure they are shared with first responders and agencies responsible for emergency preparedness.

Ensure there are multiple evacuation routes and rallying points. Your first or second evacuation site options may be blocked or unavailable at the time of the crisis.

Practice responding to crisis on a regular basis. Ensure a process is established for communicating during a crisis. Inspect equipment to ensure it operates during crisis situations.

Have a plan for discharging students. Remember that during a crisis many parents and guardians may not be able to get to the school to pick up their child. Make sure every student has a secondary contact person and contact information readily available.

Have a plan for communicating information to parents and for quelling rumors. Cultivate relationships with the media ahead of time, and identify a public information officer to communicate with the media and the community during a crisis.

Work with law enforcement officials and emergency preparedness agencies on a strategy for sharing key parts of the school crisis plans.

### **Response:**

Develop a command structure for responding to a crisis. The roles and responsibilities for educators, law enforcement and fire officials, and other first responders in responding to different types of crisis need to be developed, reviewed and approved.

### **Recovery:**

Return to the business of teaching and learning as soon as possible.

Identify and approve a team of credentialed mental health workers to provide mental health services to faculty and students after a crisis. Understand that recovery takes place over time and that the services of this team may be needed over an extended time period.

Ensure the team is adequately trained.

The plan needs to include notification of parents on actions that the school intends to take to help students recover from the crisis.

There are many other organizations that have prepared information to help all Americans plan for emergencies, including:

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

[www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

Ready Campaign

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

Federal Emergency Management Agency

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

The American Red Cross

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

Montgomery County (MD) public schools

<http://mcps.k12.md.us/info/emergency/preparedness/index.cfm>

Fairfax County (VA) Public Schools

[www.fcps.edu](http://www.fcps.edu)

North Carolina Public Schools

[www.ncpublicschools.org](http://www.ncpublicschools.org)

## **More About the Impacts of SB 424 on Transportation**

Several SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS of the transportation law changes under SB 424 (2003 Session) are listed below:

- The bus reimbursement rate is now a fixed rate based on rated capacity (size) of the bus;
- The number of riders on the bus does not affect the bus reimbursement rate. There still has to be at least one eligible rider on the bus in order to claim reimbursement;
- There will no longer be a November bus ridership count;
- TR-1 bus route forms for all routes are due to OPI by October 15. Previously, the elementary routes were due in October and routes with high school riders were due in December.
- A signed attendance agreement will typically no longer have any impact on the bus mileage reimbursement rate, but a signed attendance agreement is still necessary in order to offer the parent/guardian of a nonresident student an Individual Transportation Contract.

The following things DID NOT change:

- Each route must have at least one "eligible transportee" to receive state and county reimbursement. In other words, there has to be at least student who lives more than 3 miles from the school or is otherwise eligible under 20-10-101, MCA.
- If the resident district signs an Attendance Agreement allowing the student to be transported as an eligible transportee of another district, then the district can offer the parent an Individual Transportation Contract, if needed.
- To cross the district's boundary and pick up nonresident students, trustees have to get annual written permission from the other district. A district can cross its boundary for a safe turnaround point without having written consent, as long as no nonresident students get on the bus.
- A high school route that stays within the high school boundary can transport PK-8 students between elementary districts within the high school district. However, an elementary student crossing elementary district boundaries on a high school bus must have an Attendance Agreement signed by the resident elementary district in order to be eligible for an Individual Transportation Contract for reimbursement.

Basically:

- A written agreement between school boards is required before a bus route crosses its own district boundaries to pick up nonresident kids.
- A signed Attendance Agreement is needed for a nonresident student to be eligible for an Individual Transportation Contract for mileage.

**A Thought Regarding Hours of Service**

Currently, school district bus drivers and drivers employed by contractors for routes to and from school are not covered by the same Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations (FMCSR) as those pertaining to charter bus drivers and other interstate drivers. This allows any district to hire a bus driver for an activity trip and require many on-duty hours, including driving time and non-driving time.

Hours of Service for the FMCSR drivers are restricted to 10 hours of driving time in a 15-hour service period. If a driver is considered off duty, he/she must be able to either be away

from the job or be able to get some sleep in a berth or other appropriately designated place. If there were two drivers on board, the combined driving time would be 15 hours if neither driver had a place to sleep. Drivers must have eight hours off between shifts under FMCSR.

As each district establishes and evaluates policies for the school year, this is an important area to investigate. A district would be well advised to follow the intent of the FMCSR regarding the issue and require a limit of 10 hours driving time in a 15 hour service period, including total working hours.

Safety is the most important aspect of transporting our students to and from school. Does an overly tired driver with a busload of exuberant kids returning from a ball game at 12:30 at night really fit within the guiding principle of safety that we want for all Montana students and drivers?

**IMPORTANT DATES**

**September 16, 2003** Driver Certificate List mailed to District Clerks

**October 6, 2003** MAPT Meeting – Lewistown, Montana  
Yogo Inn, Contact Betty Kunkel at (406) 454-6776

**October 6, 2003** Driver Training – Lewistown, Montana  
Contact Shirley Barrick at (406) 538-3136  
Fergus High School Cafeteria, 6:30 to 9:30

**October 17, 2003** Driver Training – Fromberg  
Contact Renee Shanks at (406) 668-7649

**October 20-23, 2003** Yellow School Bus Tour  
Glendive, Sidney, Poplar, Glasgow

**October 21, 2003** Driver Training – Sidney  
Contact Rick Verhasselt at (406) 433-6370

**November 15, 2003** Driver Training – Townsend  
Contact Buffy Woodring at (406) 266-3561

**December 2003** Second Semester TR-13 mailed to Districts

**June 23,24,25, 2004** MAPT Conference, Lewistown, MT  
Contact Betty Kunkel at (406) 454-6776

**Update driver certificates, bus inspection forms, route information and contracts regularly. Make sure that the right bus is on the right route and OPI knows if there is a change of buses.**



# Poster Contest

NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK  
October 19-25, 2003

## Who May Enter

Entries may be submitted by any student enrolled in a public, parochial or private elementary school. Four winning posters will be chosen from each division. Division #1 - Grades K-2, Division #2 - Grades 3-5, Division #3 -Grade 6-8, Division #4 - Special Education, Division #5 CAD (Computer Aided Drawing), Division #6 - International. Division #5 and #6 are eligible for competition within their division at the National level but not eligible as the Overall National Winner or as state winners.

## Deadline Date

Completed poster designs must be submitted to the State Director by **October 6, 2003**. All entries become the property of the National School Bus Safety Week Committee or the State Director, and are not returned.

## When Can Posters Be Drawn?

Posters can be drawn anytime between January 1, 2003 and the deadline of **October 1, 2003**.

## Poster Specifications

Completed poster size must be 12" X 18" ONLY, with a one-inch (1") space left at the bottom of the poster for the entry blank. **This space must be available due to printing requirements. If not provided, poster will be disqualified.** Posters may be illustrated on the vertical or horizontal axis. National School Bus Safety Week (NSBSW) entry blank, or a reasonable facsimile with information typed or printed clearly should be **securely glued** to the **front-side in the lower left-hand corner** of the poster and on the **back-side in the center**. Age and grade level should be listed on the entry blank. Please print clearly.

Designs should be submitted on quality tag, poster illustration board or heavy paper. Construction paper may be used but winning entries must be mounted on quality tag poster. Lamination is not permitted, and **WILL** disqualify the poster. Cut paper/stencils (freehand or pre-drawn stick-on stencils) are not permitted and will disqualify the poster.

There is no limitation on the use and number of colors.

There is no limitation on the type of media - such as print crayon, felt pen, etc. - used on the poster design; however, wood, plastic, glass or metal should not be part of the poster. Collage materials should not be used. Glued on pieces will eliminate the poster.

Poster designs may not incorporate any copyrighted characters (i.e., comic and/or television characters), photographs, magazine or newspaper illustrations.

## Poster Themes Must be Original and Correct in Safety Concept

Poster themes must be original, correct in safety concept and the exclusive work of the student entering the contest in idea, design and execution.

Instructors should supervise all work created. Completion of art should be done in school during the months of January to September, coordinating with the state's poster contest. Poster and slogan must harmonize with the theme:

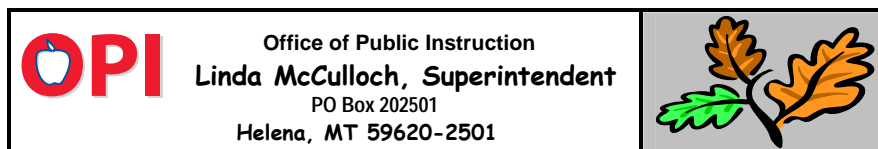
### **Poster Contest Theme for 2003: Shhh - Railroad Crossing**

*(Contestants must illustrate above theme only, and the theme must be exactly as shown above.)*

Illustrations should be positive in approach, demonstrating only proper school bus safety behaviors. **At least a part of a yellow school bus must be present in the poster.**

## Lettering

Freehand drawn letters only may be used on the poster design. **Stenciled, pre-printed, manufactured stick-on or press-on letters or tracings may not be used and will disqualify the poster.** Lettering should be clearly legible, even if used as part of the poster design.



## **State Entries**

Entries in the state poster contests are to be mailed to the address below for judging.

**Maxine Mougeot, State Pupil Transportation Director**  
**Office of Public Instruction**  
**PO Box 202501**  
**Helena, MT 59620-2501**

## **Prizes for the State Contest**

The Montana Association for Pupil Transportation (MAPT) will award cash prizes to the winners in each category. Amounts will be determined later in the year depending on the entries received in each category. The total available is \$150.00.

## **Judging**

Criteria for the selection of award-winning posters are:

- a. Relationship of the poster design to the school bus safety practices;
- b. Originality of the poster and how the idea is expressed in the poster design;
- c. Artwork and its execution; and
- d. Visual impact of the poster design.

All rules regarding poster specifications, themes, lettering, etc. must be followed. The penalty for non-compliance will be disqualification of the poster. All state entries become the property of the NSBSW Committee. The right to modify any poster for reproduction is reserved by the NSBSW Committee.

## **Prizes for the National Contest**

Prizes will be awarded for each division as follows:

1st Place and Overall Winner	1000 Savings Bond
1st Place Winners of remaining 3 divisions	500 Savings Bond
2nd Place Winners of each 4 divisions	250 Savings Bond
3rd Place Winners of each 4 divisions	100 Savings Bond
1st Place Winner - CAD division	100 Savings Bond
1st Place Winner - International division	100 Savings Bond

The National School Bus Safety Week Committee is comprised of members of the National Association for Pupil Transportation the National School Transportation Association, the National Safety Council's School Transportation Section, the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services, and school bus manufacturers and suppliers.

2003 NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK POSTER PROGRAM ENTRY BLANK	2003 NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK POSTER PROGRAM ENTRY BLANK
Student Name _____ Grade ____ Age ____	Student Name _____ Grade ____ Age ____
School _____	School _____
School Address _____	School Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Teachers Name _____	Teachers Name _____

**Please fill out two entry forms for each poster and attach one to the front of the poster and one to the back of poster.**

Thank you for your cooperation.